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What does meditation actually mean?
It is the dynamic retention of our awareness
on a chosen theme or subject. Of course,
this is only a very elementary definition, but
at this stage we will not enlarge on it,
for we must first realize what condition
is necessary for the mental practice
we call meditation. It is the ability
to unswervingly maintain your awareness
on a chosen theme for as long as you
decide to continue with the same. The
true name of this ability is the power
of concentration. Without concentration,
the attempted meditation will be nothing
more than a senseless floating one
over waves of thoughts, which
come from an unknown source and defy
efforts to put them in order according
to a preconceived plan.

The Latin origin of the English word
"concentration" has a clear and definite
meaning. It refers to that which has a
common center, or is moving toward a center,
and is best expressed by the term
"one-pointedness"; ~~which, etymologically~~
~~is not far from~~.

Imagine that you have an unsharpened
pencil or a small stick. If you have to
use either of them to pierce a piece of cardboard,
you will find it difficult until the ends
of your simple implements have been properly
sharpened.

Even considerable pressure exerted on an unsharpened pencil will not produce a neat hole. Why? Because a simple physical law is at work. Your power has been dissipated over the whole, comparatively large surface of the blunt instrument, thus providing insufficient force to separate and remove the particles of cardboard and form a clean hole.

Similarly, a blunt knife or saw does not cut well and the result is unsatisfactory since the effort is wasted by being spread over to large an area and too many points. It is not concentrated.

But sharpen your tools and there will be little difficulty in piercing a hole or cutting a straight line. Where then lies the secret, if any? Merely in the fact that force applied through a single point acts more effectively and seems far greater than the same force simultaneously exerted on many points. This elementary law should be clearly and strongly established in the mind of anyone studying concentration and meditation.

Here we are not seeking to perfect a physical tool. The proper employment of the mind is our first aim, the mysterious power and attainment which can be gained only by use of a well-sharpened, one-pointed tool. With regard to the mind we may call

"An average man's mind is filled with countless thoughts, and therefore each individual one is extremely weak. When, in place of these many useless thoughts, there appears only one, it is a power in itself and has a wide influence.

We know that many great scientists and inventors, whose ideas are now serving humanity, often ascribed their ~~own~~ unique discoveries to just this capacity for strong, concentrated thinking. This was the case with Sir Isaac Newton, Einstein, Thomas Edison, Louis Pasteur and many others, all of whom were conscious of and able to use their extraordinary power of concentration, that is, the ability to think solely about the object of their investigation to the exclusion of all else.

In Latin America and Mexico people who are unable to control their minds and forever wander from one thought to another are jokingly, ~~but~~ but appropriately, referred to as having 500 thoughts at one time.

The idea of sharpening or concentrating our minds is neither new, nor illogical, but rather scientific, since it has definite means and aims which can be ~~thoroughly~~ thoroughly investigated, applied and reached.

True concentration is not merely an ability to direct and maintain our full and exclusive attention for some minutes or

Say a pinhead, but rather it is the ability to stop the thinking machine and look at it when it has ceased revolving. A craftsman feels sure that his hands will obey him and execute the exact movements he requires. Indeed, he does not even think about it and works without worrying whether or not his hands will do just what he wants at a given moment. Under such conditions, hand and other human organs, when working properly, constitute a harmonious unit, capable of functioning in their own particular sphere of action.

Now look closely at the functions of your mind-brain. Can you affirm with utter certainty that you always think only when and about what you really want to, and that therefore you know from where your thoughts and feelings come into the light of your consciousness? Can you withhold the entry or limit the duration of thoughts in your mind, for as long as you wish? If you are able to analyse your thinking processes, your honest answer will be no.

So it would seem that the average man is not a good craftsman, because he cannot control his chief tool, the mind and its thoughts. His life is spent in using and accepting something which originates outside his reach and

The practical study of concentration and meditation opens to us the world not only of results, but also of causes, and lifts us beyond the slavery of uncontrolled feelings and thoughts.

Also, you should know that the way of concentration leads much further than the mere capacity for one-pointedness of mind. Actual success means nothing less than the understanding of the mind's nature and source, and the simultaneous transcending of both these factors. It is the entering into a new state of consciousness about which you cannot possibly know or anticipate anything until you achieve the twofold realization just mentioned.

Concentration will not necessarily cure your physical diseases or change your personal karma. On the other hand, if the study is successfully conducted to the end, its final aim, the complete domination of the mind, will give you the key to the new consciousness which opens the mysterious gate from which you can see your life as it really is. Then you will recognize that even the unchanged karma belonging to your petty personality is something really apart from you ~~when you have achieved some control of the mind through concentration~~

'where does all this work with concentration lead, and what is the next step beyond?'

To that consciousness now ripened within you is posed the question: To Whom has all this work on concentration been happening?

To your mental personality, your ego, composed of feeling, thoughts and physical attributes?

Surely you know that this is not so. When you work with the art of concentration you soon find yourself moving beyond

the triple individuality to a state in which you are absolutely free, ~~and this~~ and this is only a foretaste of that bliss which "surpasses all human understanding". So that still mysterious "I" to which all attributes seem to refer, remains to be found. This can be done only by true meditation.

~~When its understanding and the use of concentration in your daily life has brought you to this point of inwardly searching for the ultimate answer~~

For many pseudo occult circles, so-called 'meditations' on themes which are given in advance, such as a virtue, visualization of holy images, the play of words and thoughts, etc., are only the mediocre activity of an unconquered mind, which often leads only to the realization by the individual of the lack of control of concentration within himself. Mind cannot be other than it always is. Techniques of writing and speaking which use the mind

As a basis, the method commonly used by people untrained in high concentration, are similar to fishing in muddy water where you cannot even guess at the type of fish you will catch. If your hook is big enough and the bait is adequate, you know that you will probably catch a large fish.

When the mind is surpassed, and the radar of your regularly born consciousness allows you to see beneath the surface of the water, then everything assumes a different shape.

From the point of view of an untrained layman, true meditation is superconsciousness, but for those ~~who have~~ who have achieved the sum of their study of concentration, it is only the normal state of consciousness.

Through the understanding and use of concentration you have learned to be still. Now realize that this stillness, this inner untroubled point of balance, is all! It is the source of all true knowledge, if you still need any knowledge. It is the beginning of Samadhi, which makes you immortal. This has no relationship whatsoever to the lower ~~to~~ kinds of ecstasies belonging to the outer-mental realm, which rather are confused visions in relativity, as is the outer physical world, only transferred to a slightly higher level. The Samadhi of which I speak is the spiritual

Consciousness which is devoid of all visions,
and which is ultimate peace and bliss,
the legitimate inheritance of all human
beings.

It is truly a case of "Seeing God" because
He is just this bliss of the final Stillness,
that ultimate perfection, independent of
anything and beyond time and space.

Concentration Ex

#1

Get a clock with second hand -

Sit quietly and concentrate all your
attention on the second hand. Note
the time you start your concentration.
When think of nothing, see nothing,
lost the second hand. The second
you do. Note the time if it took 40 seconds
of time, multiply that 40 by 3 which gives
you 120 seconds or two minutes. That
is your goal for your first exercise.

2 min. of concentration on the second
hand with out being distracted.

#2 Now do the same with the sound OM
mentally or vocally sound OM & note the
time you started and then the time
you lost your concentration. Work
on the same time schedule as above.

#3 Toothpick or pin -